

Revelation 8

Seventh Seal:

1 And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

This chapter reveals what is to take place at the breaking of the seventh seal. In chapter eight we will read of four of the seven trumpets and their corresponding woes. In this verse we notice that there will be a half hour silence in Heaven. We could call it the calm before the storm – Heaven is silent as it contemplates exactly what is going to happen next. All the inhabitants of Heaven know that God's wrath is about to be poured out upon the earth and they are awestruck by the severity of it (see Romans 11:22).

Romans 11:22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

This wrath will come in seven stages. An angel with a trumpet announces each stage. In Revelation 7 we heard the great choir singing praise to God, but in chapter 8 we hear absolute silence until the first blast of Judgement is announced (Psalm 76:8; Zephaniah 1:7).

Psalm 76:8 Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still.

Zephaniah 1:7 Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord God : for the day of the Lord is at hand: for the Lord hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests.

2 And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

Seven trumpets are poised at the lips of seven angels. Trumpets were often used as a warning or call to arms.

3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

We see here another angel, who has a bowl containing incense. We know that this incense represents the prayers of God's people throughout the ages. These prayers were probably prayers of the Tribulation saints for deliverance from the hands of persecutors and tormentors. The words "all saints" may indicate that these prayers are from all dispensations where believers were persecuted for their faith. If so, it's encouraging to know that God never ignores or forgets the prayers of His own.

4 And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

These prayers ascend up to God. It is important to note that, while an angel has the incense, it is only the Lord Jesus Christ who is the Mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5).

1 Timothy 2:5 [For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.](#)

Heaven knows that it is now time for God to pour out His wrath upon the world.

5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

Fire is mixed with the incense, which represents the Judgement. As the mixture is cast upon the earth there is heard the sound of voices, thunder, lightening and earthquake, which things are only the first stages of what is to come. This is payback time for those who have ill-treated the people of God. This is the signal for the wrath of God to begin as He purges the earth of evil.

6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

The seven angels prepare to sound their trumpets. God's patience has run out with an evil world that is intent on rebelling against Him. One by one the trumpets will announce a part of the unfolding and intensifying wrath of God.

7 The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

First Trumpet:

As the angel blew his trumpet blood, fire and hail fell upon the earth. This Judgement is very similar to that which the Egyptians experienced in Exodus 9:18-26.

Exodus 9:18-26 Behold, to morrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof even until now. Send therefore now, and gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field; for upon every man and beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought home, the hail shall come down upon them, and they shall die. He that feared the word of the LORD among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses: And he that regarded not the word of the Lord left his servants and his cattle in the field. And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch forth thine hand toward heaven, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt, upon man, and upon beast, and upon every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt. And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt. So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. And the hail smote throughout all the land of

Egypt all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field. Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, was there no hail.

Joel prophesied that there would be blood, fire and smoke during this time (Joel 2:30).

Joel 2:30 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

This comes as a terrible storm destroys a third part of the trees and burns up all of the green grass, which will further deplete the world's food resources. It will literally set the region on fire (Joel 1:18-20).

Joel 1:18-20 How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. O LORD, to thee will I cry: for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field. The beasts of the field cry also unto thee: for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

Weather forecasters always mention how many trees are destroyed in major storms. Though this may sound like a catastrophic volcanic event resulting from the earthquake of verse 5, the words "cast upon the earth" suggest that the cause comes from above rather than from land. Some commentators suggest that this is caused by a nuclear explosion, but this seems unlikely. Either way, there will be great devastation and people will be in total fear and shock (Luke 21:25-26).

Luke 21:25-26 And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

8 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;

Second Trumpet:

A great mountain of fiery rock will be cast into the sea [Mediterranean?]. This may be a meteor, though there are some who believe it to be some kind of huge missile or even another volcanic eruption. It is probably best to see it as a gigantic rock that comes from space – therefore a meteor, comet or asteroid. Whatever it is, it will cause a third part of the world's oceans to become contaminated. This contamination will make the water look like blood. Since God turned the River Nile into a blood-like substance (Exodus 7:17-21).

Exodus 7:17-21 Thus saith the LORD, In this thou shalt know that I am the LORD: behold, I will smite with the rod that is in mine hand upon the waters which are in the river, and they shall be turned to blood. And the fish that is in the river shall die, and the river shall stink; and the Egyptians shall lothe to drink of the water of the river. And the LORD spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of water, that they may become blood; and that there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood, and in vessels of stone. And Moses and Aaron did so, as the LORD commanded; and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood. And the fish that was in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river; and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.

Can He not do the same again without the need of modern technology?

9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

The impact and the pollution will kill off a third of the fishstock. It also appears as though it will quickly rust whatever shipping is located in that part of the world, adding to the economic disaster we have already noted in a previous chapter. The ships being destroyed may be caused by the resulting tsunamis after a gigantic rock hits the sea.

10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;

Third Trumpet:

A star falls from space as the third trumpet is sounded. It will be on fire as it enters the earth's atmosphere and hits the earth itself. This may be another meteor or asteroid. Whatever its nature, it will contaminate a third part of the drinking water through the poison it contains. It is suggested that this heavenly missile will break up as it enters earth's atmosphere, so increasing its ability to spread its poison so quickly.

11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

This star is given the name "Wormwood" because of the bitter taste of the water it contaminates. "Wormwood" or *absinthos* is a known herb in the Middle East, so it's likely that the Lord is using this as a comparison. It is a stupefying and lethal plant. This means that there may not be any visible sign that the drinking water is polluted, until it is tasted.

12 And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part

of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

Fourth Trumpet:

The description here backs up the thought that all these things come from above, from space, rather than the earth itself. The events cause severe atmospheric disturbances. Maybe due to the meteor or asteroid, a third part of the earth's natural light is affected (that is, of the sun, moon and stars). This haze will affect only a third part of the day, meaning that during daylight hours about one third will be almost dark. It will be like extended night. It is obvious though, that God does not need natural events to bring about what this verse speaks of, He could just as well bring them about by His command. No doubt people will realise that such things are not natural or manmade occurrences, especially since the two witnesses will be preaching that they are plagues sent by God (Revelation 11:3).

Revelation 11:3 **And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.**

13 And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

During this thick darkness an angel will be seen flying around the earth. How will people still rebel against the Lord? It is interesting to note that the word "angel" in this verse is translated as "eagle" in some other versions of the Bible. Is this the fourth angelic being (cherub) mentioned in Revelation 4:7-8?

Revelation 4:7-8 **And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and**

they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

He will be announcing that greater woes than these are going to be experienced by mankind. Against the backdrop of the terrible darkness, this brilliant angel will be a glorious sight – he will be the only light the earth will see for several hours. How terrified will earth's inhabitants be at his appearance?